A STATEMENT ON TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

OCTOBER 1988

90-04122/

STATEMENT OF ENDORSEMENT

We, the undersigned, fully endorse 'Tourism 2000' as a guide for the future development of tourism in Prince Edward Island.

It is projected that the Island tourism industry will soon be the Province's largest industry. As a major contributor to the provincial economy and work force, tourism will play an even more significant role in the future of Prince Edward Island.

We believe that a comprehensive plan is the key to ensuring the appropriate growth of this vital industry. That is, development which respects the environment, heritage and culture of this Province while simultaneously meeting the needs and preferences of our visitors.

Dated at Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, this eleventh day of October, A.D., 1988.

Hon. Bernard Valcourt
Minister of State (Small Business and Tourism)

Hon. Gordon MacInnis, Minister
Department of Tourism and Parks

Walter Wyand, President
Tourism Industry Association of Prince Edward Island
(TIAPEI)

Reagh Ellis, Chairman
Tourism Industry Association of Prince Edward Island
Development Committee

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Tourism 2000 is a broad-based project to plan and develop the Island tourism industry over the next 12 years to the beginning of the next millenium. The goal is to create the greatest possible economic return to the province from tourism consistent with eight industry-endorsed development principles. These principles state that the goal must be achieved by developing the potential of the industry in the following ways:

1. **Tourism development must proceed in concert with the development of the other industrial sectors of the province.**

2. **The tourism goal must be achieved by promoting P.E.I. lifestyles, values, heritage and cultural traditions while preserving the attributes and attractions unique to the province.**

3. **Visitors will be encouraged by creating attractions appropriate to our environment and activities in harmony with the conservation and preservation of that environment.**

4. **The goal will be achieved by encouraging a wider distribution of visitors across the province in both time and space.**

5. **A requirement for achieving the goal is provision of a quality product and service measured against first-class standards of excellence.**

6. **The tourism industry will develop by using marketing strategies based on potential demand, consumer need and the willingness to pay and opening of new markets.**

7. **Tourism development must proceed through the leadership and initiative of the industry with the support and service of government.**

8. **To achieve the goal, objectives and strategies of the plan must be continually revised to match the development of the industry with consumer needs consistent with social and environment considerations of the province.**

It is a development project based on natural and obvious Island strengths aimed at increasing visitor numbers by three percent per annum, which will result in a total visitor population in excess of one million by the year 2000. It is proposed to accomplish this goal by distributing tourism more widely through space and time. Increased peak season development will be oriented toward the eastern and western portions of the Island. An active approach to developing the shoulder seasons Island-wide will be undertaken.

The types of attractions will be based upon the natural environment, culture, heritage and a high-quality tourism facility and staff. The Tourism 2000 plan will encourage a wide range of visitors, concentrating on a variety of niche markets in addition to the presently developed markets.

Ongoing interactions with governments and other organizations will be essential to ensure a fully developed infrastructure to support tourism industry development.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism 2000 is a project developed by the Tourism Industry Association of Prince Edward Island (TIAPEI) and carried forward by the Development Committee of that organization in conjunction with the Prince Edward Island Department of Tourism and Parks. The goal of this project is to create by the Year 2000, the greatest possible economic return to the Province from tourism consistent with a set of development principles. The Development Principles were endorsed at the TIAPEI Annual Meeting in March of 1988.

The scope of this undertaking is large. Although the time frame is only 12 years, one need only think of the numerous trends, changes and developments that have had a startling impact on tourism in the Province in the previous 12 years - 1976 to 1988. Had the process begun in 1976, who would have thought that by 1988: Sailboards would be as commonplace as they are on the Island; an airline excursion from Tokyo to Prince Edward Island would take less than one day; the making of an Anne of Green Gables film would have such a world-wide impact; a place to exchange yen would be sought for on Prince Edward Island; and a world-class culinary training institute would be operating in the Province?

The challenge of planning in such a dynamic environment requires imagination and vision. What developments in tourism that are as yet unconceived will affect Prince Edward Island by 2000? With this in mind, planning has to be adaptable and fluid in specifics while maintaining a constancy of basic approach. The process is exciting and to some frightening, but an unplanned tourism development over the next 12 years presents a more alarming alternative for the Island and the industry.

The culmination of Tourism 2000 is 12 years away. What is planned, developed and carried out in the Island tourism industry during that time will measure the success or failure of this project. To paraphrase the cartoon character Pogo: *"We have see'd the future, and it is us."*

MAJOR DIRECTION

Tourism 2000 presents a major change of direction for the Island tourism industry. In general, tourism development on Prince Edward Island has been reactive - responding to situations that arise from without and taking advantage of these situations. An organized approach to development becomes proactive - the industry is taking hold of the situation and deciding where it wants it to go. Tourism 2000 indicates that the Island tourism industry has matured to the stage of becoming a product-led industry as opposed to being entirely consumer driven.

The industry, through the Tourism 2000 Project, is stating that Prince Edward Island has a unique product for the public - one which we are going to build and develop based on natural and obvious Island strengths. By building on these existing attributes, the industry is going to determine what the product will be. We will then go to the market and find the clients to fill the niche.

To achieve the objectives of the project, TIAPEI, the Department of Tourism and Parks and the Government of Canada must play specific and complementary roles. To this end, mission statements or roles or each organization have been developed.

A. TIAPEI Mission Statement

TIAPEI exists to provide leadership to the tourism industry by setting objectives, developing and maintaining coordination and representing industry interests so that the tourism industry can prosper and make an increasing contribution to the economy of the province within agreed development principles.

B. Department of Tourism and Parks Mission Statement

The Department of Tourism and Parks exists to provide service and support to the industry through TIAPEI so that the industry can develop, prosper and make an increasing contribution to the economy of the province within agreed principles of development. Furthermore, the department must also represent the public interest in the development of the tourism industry by having responsibility for ensuring that agreed-upon principles and standards are followed.

C. Federal Government Role

The role of the federal government in tourism development is to encourage and support the economic growth, excellence and international competitiveness of the tourism industry. This is to be accomplished by providing industry with market and product analysis which suggest future direction, ensuring a favourable environment for tourism development and by supporting industry through specific development programs within agreed development principles.

PRINCIPLES OF DEVELOPMENT

An October, 1987 Workshop on Tourism Planning in Prince Edward Island laid the groundwork for the Tourism 2000 concept and the Principles of Development through which projects must be evaluated. The Tourism 2000 Plan states that the goal must be achieved by developing the potential of the industry in the following ways:

1. **Tourism development must proceed in concert with the development of the other industrial sectors of the Province.**

2. **The tourism goal must be achieved by promoting P.E.I. lifestyles, values, heritage and cultural traditions while preserving the attributes and attractions unique to the Province.**

3. **Visitors will be encouraged by creating attractions appropriate to our environment and activities in harmony with the conservation and preservation of that environment.**

4. **The goal will be achieved by encouraging a wider distribution of visitors across the Province in both time and space.**

5. **A requirement for achieving the goal is provision of a quality product and service measured against first-class standards of excellence.**

6. **The tourism industry will develop by using marketing strategies based on potential demand, consumer need and the willingness to pay and opening of new markets.**

7. **Tourism development must proceed through the leadership and initiative of the industry with the support and service of government.**

8. **To achieve the goal, objectives and strategies of the plan must be continually revised to match the development of the industry with consumer needs consistent with social and environmental considerations of the Province.**

An explanation and elaboration of each of these Development Principles will hopefully lend insight to the aim of the Tourism 2000 plan.

1. **Tourism development must proceed in concert with the development of the other industrial sectors of the Province.**

   The other major industrial sectors of the Island are agriculture and the fishery. Obviously, the relationship between their development and the effect they have on the tourism industry cannot be overlooked. Many smaller and fledgling industrial pursuits also need to be considered, for example: the development of high-tech manufacturing, the race horse industry and many small, specialty-product, cottage industries now coming on stream in the Province. These along with the development of a culture industry will provide fertile fields for tourism development.

2. **The tourism goal must be achieved by promoting P.E.I. lifestyles, values, heritage and cultural traditions while preserving the attributes and attractions unique to the Province.**

   There are many social and historical aspects of life on P.E.I. that are the envy of those 'from away'. Living with them daily, we often do not appreciate their uniqueness and appeal. This appeal of the Island is widespread and can actively be developed as a method of more widely distributing visitors to the province.

   There is a subtlety involved in this principle. As with all development, there is always the risk of destroying or denigrating the very appeal that the development is based on. This statement makes it obvious that tourism development must be done in such a way as to preserve and protect the unique physical and cultural features of Prince Edward Island.

3. **Visitors will be encouraged by creating attractions appropriate to our environment and activities in harmony with the conservation and preservation of that environment.**

   We are stating that there are certain attraction aspects of the tourism industry that are not appropriate to the Province or the image that the tourism industry wants to develop.

   The recently adopted Prince Edward Island Conservation Strategy identifies tourism as a major component of landscape and land-use planning. From the point of view of the Conservation Strategy: "Tourism is an industry based upon renewable resources that can be expanded considerably without undue stress upon the environment." It points out that landscape defines the personality of the Province and is a sustainable resource that must be viewed as a whole if it is to retain its integrity.

   This development criteria identifies the tourism industry as both a user and protector of the environment which has reached a stage of maturity where it readily accepts both these responsibilities.

4. **The goal will be achieved by encouraging a distribution of visitors across the Province in both time and space.**

   An aim of the Tourism 2000 Project is to encourage the development of the tourism industry to a wider degree across the Province. The primary means of doing this is **not** to redistribute visitors but to develop an environment that will encourage longer stays and an exploration of some of the unique aspects of the total Island.

5. **A requirement for achieving the goal is provision of a quality product and service measured against first-class standards of excellence.**

   Quality is becoming more and more a byword of the tourism industry. A constant upgrading is required since from a quality point of view in an increasingly competitive industry, to stand still is to fall back. In addition to constant upgrading, there is a need to have a valid measuring stick to know where one stands relative to the rest of the industry. The Tourism 2000 Project will develop and put in place that measuring stick.

6. **The tourism industry will develop by using marketing strategies based on potential demand, consumer need and willingness to pay and opening of new markets.**

   Simply developing and using strategies implies the movement from a reactive to a proactive tourism industry. In addition to gauging potential demand and consumer need, the tourism industry intends to encourage the development of entirely new markets as yet largely untouched by the uniqueness of the Island. the tourism marketing approach will be on a steadily widening front through time.

7. **Tourism development must proceed through the leadership and initiative of the industry with the support and service of government.**

   This criteria formalizes the relationship between industry and government. The industry leads and develops initiative. The governmental role is to assist and support the industry in achieving its goals.

8. **To achieve the goal, objectives and strategies of the plan must be continually revised to match the development of the industry with consumer needs consistent with social and environmental considerations of the Province.**

   Tourism 2000 has to be a visionary and adaptable strategy for planning in a quickly changing and dynamic environment. It is important for a plant to have that built-in adaptability and capacity for change, but it is equally important for it to remain true to its original objectives and principles. This criteria identifies those capacities.

In summary, the Tourism 2000 plan will encourage the development of the tourism industry in an integrated and sensitive way, protecting the social, physical and environmental values and resources of the Province. This will be done with a dynamic approach on a broad front based on quality development in order to encourage a wider distribution of visitors through space and time. The industry accepts the role of leadership and government that of support.

STRATEGIES

Strategies for development are the 'nuts and bolts' of how the goals might be achieved. They include the answers for some of the problems we have set ourselves in commencing the planning process.

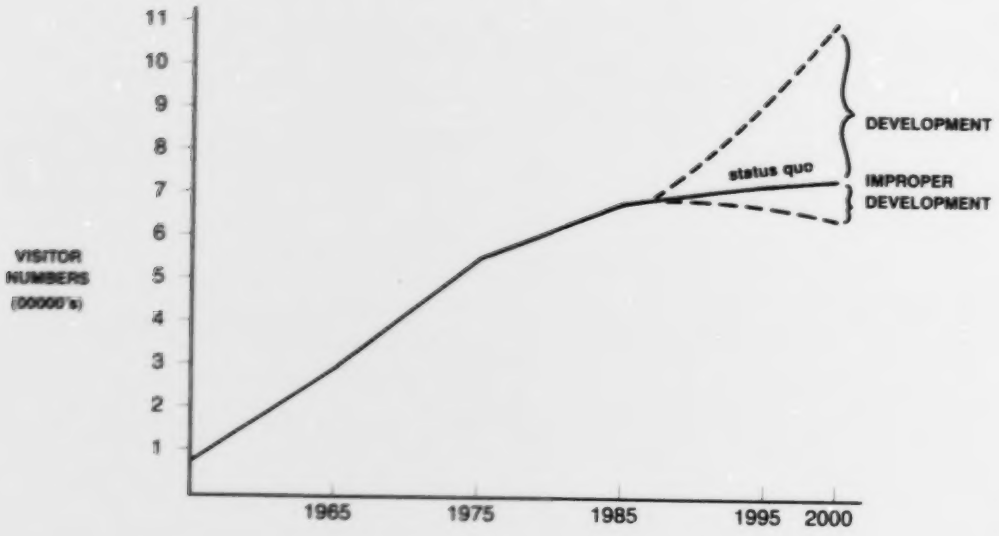
I. NUMBERS OF VISITORS

While the overall goal is to create the greatest possible economic gain to the year 2000, some practical yearly goals must be set and achieved. The overall aim is to increase visitor numbers by three percent annually over the 12-year period. This will achieve a goal of over one million visitors annually by the year 2000.

For historical perspective, ***Figure 1*** shows the increase in visitor numbers over the last 30 years and with an eye-fitted curve, it indicates a leveling out of numbers should the 'status quo' be maintained. The extending of this curve to the year 2000 would indicate that with the tourism industry remaining essentially static, numbers of visitors would likely level out to a small annual increase, climbing to about 775,000 visits annually at the end of the 12-year period.

FIGURE 1

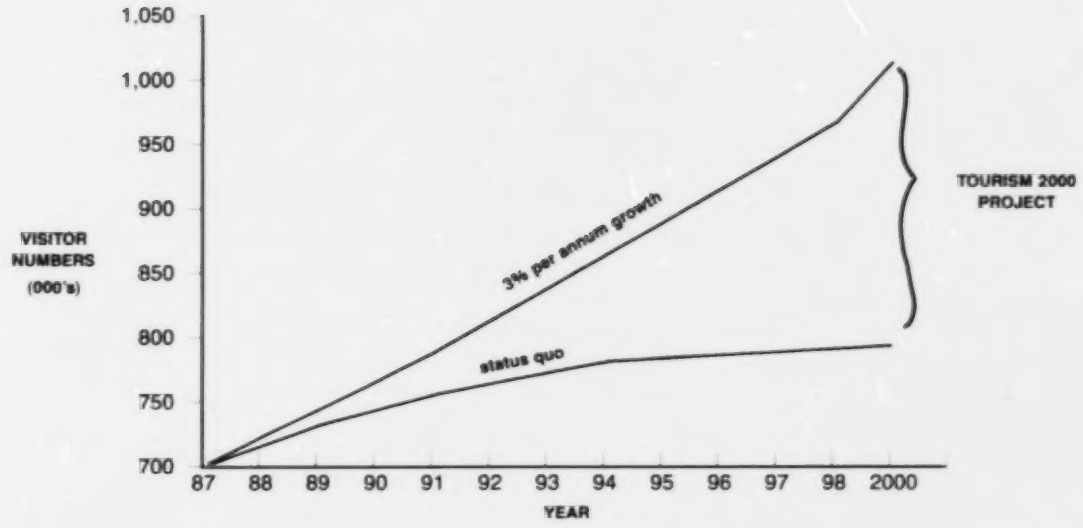
VISITOR NUMBERS TO P.E.I., 1965-1987, Estimated to 2000



By actively setting out to create an annual three-percent increase, the tourism industry is attempting to add another quarter of a million (250,000) visitors annually to that projected status quo level of tourism activity! This aimed-for growth is illustrated in ***Figure 2***, which contains the same data as Figure 1 but has it magnified for the 12-year planning horizon applicable to Tourism 2000. It is interesting to note that this actively increased visitor growth in terms of absolute numbers is about the same as the period of 1965 to 1975 and more than twice the visitor increase from 1975 to 1985. The aim of over one million visitors by the year 2000 will mean an increase of 35% over the present number of visitors to Prince Edward Island.

FIGURE 2

PROJECTED VISITOR NUMBERS, P.E.I., 1987-2000



II. METHOD OF GROWTH

It is valid to assume that an increase of 35% in visitor numbers in essentially the same pattern as presently exists (concentration on the North Shore-Charlottetown Triangle) in the same time period (mid-June to beginning September) would have an overall negative impact on tourism numbers and would result in a drop down to or perhaps below the 'status quo' levels outlined in Figures 1 and 2. So continued unlimited growth in the standard pattern will not achieve the practical goal and, in fact, may even act in a negative way by resulting in decreased visitor satisfaction.

There are two dimensions for tourism to grow in order to achieve the numbers aimed for and still satisfy the Development principles - time and space.

a) Time

The core tourism area of the Island is essentially full in July and August. For the remainder of the year, from a tourism point of view, it is almost empty. Building on the shoulder seasons, from May to June and September to October, in the core area will be the time-dimension method of increasing visits while maintaining quality of experience. This thrust will call for a quality improvement program for the core area. Accommodations and attractions will require upgrading to make them adaptable to the additional needs of shoulder season visitors.

b) Space

Even during the peak months of the tourism season, much of Prince Edward Island outside the core area is unknown to the traveller. With that in mind, the Tourism 2000 emphasis on a building component will be concentrated in the eastern and western portions of the Province.

In summary, with an emphasis on increasing visitor numbers during the peak season in the extremities of the Province and during the shoulder season in the core area plus the extremities, much of the increase in visitor numbers will be adequately spread out in space and time, with the overall aim being a six-month tourism season.

III. TYPE OF ATTRACTION

It is obviously going to take a much different type of attraction and approach to those attractions to encourage visitors to spread out in space and time. A far more sophisticated attitude than merely finding a beach and sun and standing back will have to be developed!

The understanding that Islanders have a unique lifestyle and environment and that the desire to experience a broad sampling of it is much demanded by visitors is fast becoming a most valuable tourism asset. As the development criteria points out, the aim is to build on natural and obvious Island strengths. Prince Edward Island is seen as a natural, community-oriented place, one that is caring and supportive, safe and filled with simple, worthwhile values. All of this plus the ready availability of all the amenities of a modern culture are important aspects to concentrate tourism development on.

The obvious Island strengths of community, history and a sense of place are important in a world where less of these values are evident. This coupled with a strong environmental aspect, readily available and unique throughout the Island, offer a valuable development tool.

The 1988 nature-based advertising campaign is an example of building on the inherent strengths we possess and the unique natural features of an Island community. Tourism 2000 will continue to identify and develop these sorts of features, thus widening the front into new market niches.

Island culture and heritage will continue to provide an increasingly valuable attraction for developing time and space-dispersed tourism. It will take time and a concerted effort to stimulate these culture and heritage-based attractions to extend in time and space and, in turn, encourage the Island visitor to take advantage of them. This has the potential to become a 'chicken and egg' situation. The tourism industry will have to play a major role in supporting and developing culture and heritage-based attractions in order to avoid frustration and subsequent stagnation.

The hospitality industry will be developed as an attraction. Comfort, convenience and safety in a pleasurable environment is an attraction in itself. It is becoming increasingly important that visitors know what to expect.

An Island-wide grading system based on internationally-recognized standards will provide this information. In addition, it will assist the industry in knowing where it stands relative to other areas catering to the same markets. A serious upgrading program for the physical plant will have a measuring stick in place for self-evaluation as well as for establishing measurable goals and successes.

The human resources of the hospitality industry will also undergo an upgrading process as part of the Tourism 2000 plan. Towards this end, a Tourism Training Institute will be pursued as a goal. This facility will provide graduates with the skills necessary for management and operation of a quality tourism facility. In addition, the Institute will have an extension role to play in operating upgrading courses for those presently in the industry as well as training programs to enhance the quality of seasonal staff.

IV. TYPE OF VISITOR

Development, as outlined for the Tourism 2000 Project, will be attractive to quite a different type of visitor. Obviously, sun, sand and surf are not going to play the role they have to the present. A more learning and experience-oriented type of visitor will be the principal user of the results of Tourism 2000. Studies indicate that, in general, tourists are anxious to experience a wide range of learning opportunities as part of a vacation.

By encouraging a long stay and an exploration of the whole Island, the present visitor population will be expanding horizons and taking advantage of the mid-season results of industry planning and development. In addition to a wider and more complete servicing of the present type of Island visitor, there are a number of specific visitor types that this form of development will encourage:

a) Motor Coach Travellers

The motor coach trade increased 15% in 1987. It will continue to be a growth trade for some time to come and is particularly applicable to tourism development during the shoulder seasons. Even this mode of vacation is dynamic as trends show a movement away from tightly-organized group tours towards the FIT (free independent travel) type of touring.

b) Nature Lovers

The Island has a wide appeal to nature enthusiasts. The broad range of bird watching, nature photography, spring and fall migration activities, botany and marine nature experiences offer wide opportunities to build and develop vacation activities on.

c) Adventure Seekers

For many, a vacation now must have an adventure component. Opportunities for adventure abound on Prince Edward Island, particularly in natural settings. Attractions and activities can be provided to satisfy this increasing sector of the visitor population.

d) Meditators

The Island offers unlimited opportunities and settings conducive to quietness and thoughtfulness. The opportunity to 'get away from it all' for a chance to quietly think and put ones life in order is increasingly appealing to today's vacationer. What can be more inspirational than a walk on a deserted Island beach?

e) Heritage Buffs

Increased attention to the role of Prince Edward Island in Canada's history and the many physical examples of that heritage will continue to be developed and expanded as a basis for visitor appeal.

f) Sports Enthusiasts

Sporting facilities continue to improve, and the Island is actively being promoted as a sports event location. The 1991 Winter Games will assist in this development as will the ongoing activities of the tourism industry and sports associations.

g) Vacation Nibblers

Young, upwardly-mobile professionals are replacing one annual vacation with three to five-day vacations three or four times per year. This vacation trend is especially attractive to developing the shoulder seasons.

h) International Travellers

An aim of Tourism 2000 is to encourage a widened and strongly-developed international component. Japan is a cornerstone of this development, with Anne of Green Gables paving the way into this market. Europe is also to be an actively pursued market, due jointly to Anne and improved air travel convenience and cost.

The types of visitors outlined above is in no way a complete list but is instead an example of the sorts of visitors we see the Tourism 2000 Project encouraging. What this shows is that the young Ontario and Quebec family is not the principal target for increased tourism activity into the future. It is instead the important basis to build a more diverse and widened visitor population upon. The niche markets of the 1990's will provide the opportunity to achieve the Tourism 2000 goal of three percent annual growth spread through time and space.

V. INFRASTRUCTURE

Planning cannot be carried on in a vacuum. There are numerous interrelationships that have to be taken into account in the process. The Development Committee of T.I.A.P.E.I. has an ongoing role to play in the activation of this program. The wide scope of the committee, encompassing the industry as well as provincial and federal agencies associated with tourism, makes it well suited to become the instigating force in the ongoing development of the Tourism 2000 plan.

There is a need now to activate this plan by developing short-term, achievement-oriented goals. This is an obvious role for the Development Committee to become involved in. The tourism industry will have to take an ongoing interest in the transportation system. Quality of roads, airport facilities and schedules as well as ferry systems all play a vital role in tourism development. The development of a fixed link to New Brunswick would have a major influence on the Island tourism industry.

In order that all aspects of the fixed link may be carefully examined and their impact assessed, the Tourism Industry Association and the Government will cooperatively examine all details of a fixed link as they become known. It is insufficient to be simply reactive; therefore, this cooperative effort will be undertaken immediately. In order that this question may be addressed in a coordinated and comprehensive manner, a detailed study is critical.

Environmental and community planning will have an effect on the tourism industry. The Development Principles of Tourism 2000 might well have an influencing role to play in such planning activities. Development of the tourism physical plant will be of importance. To ensure success of Tourism 2000, it has to be carried beyond simply words and concepts. Government and Industry policy will have to be developed in a way to reflect the goals and principles of the plan. To this end, the industry is going to have to make some major decisions during the implementation phase. Planned development is going to mean controlled and/or influenced development.

If Tourism 2000 is the way of the future, there will have to be limitations placed on the existing pattern. Development zones for Tourism development will likely have to result. These will have to be reflected in both government control and incentive. Ensuring a quality tourism industry will require restraint as well as imagination.

SUMMARY

Tourism 2000 is a broad-based project to plan and develop the Island tourism industry over the next 12 years to the beginning of the next millenium. The goal is to create the greatest possible economic return to the Province from tourism consistent with 8 industry-endorsed Development Principles.

It is a development project based on natural and obvious Island strengths aimed at increasing visitor numbers by three percent per annum, which will result in a total visitor population of in excess of one million by the year 2000. It is proposed that this goal will be accomplished by distributing tourism activity more widely through space and time. Increased peak-season development will be oriented toward the eastern and western portions of the Island. An active approach to developing the shoulder seasons will be undertaken.

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Ongoing interactions with governments and other organizations will be essential to ensure a fully-developed infrastructure to support tourism industry development.